

NORTHFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes of the meeting on February 11, 2015

The meeting was called to order by Pam Knox at 6:40 pm.

- I. **ROLL CALL:** Present were Commissioners Pam Knox, Ruth Ruttenberg, Christine Barnes, Laura Hill-Eubanks.
- II. **SET/ADJUST AGENDA**
- III. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (scheduled):** None
- IV. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** January 14, 2015 minutes approved 4-0-0.
- V. **DISCUSSION**
 - a. **LANDS report:** Commissioners were given copies of the Northfield Public Tree Inventory, conducted and reported on by the Land Stewardship Program (LANDS) and the Vermont Urban & Community Forestry Program. The report includes information on the trees in the public right of way and around the Northfield town area. The hope is that the report will be used to develop planning and management strategies that will maximize the benefits of a healthy tree population in Northfield. The LANDS group has also completed a natural resources inventory along the Dog River to be used in planning and development, and especially for the Brownfields assessment. The reports will be sent to the town manager and town zoning administrator. Will also see about having NCC documents available in the library. Christine will send digitized reports to Laura to post online for the public to access.
 - b. **Town Meeting Day:** NCC will set up a display table for Town Meeting Day. Pam will reserve a table. Leslie, Christine, Ruth, and Laura will staff the table in shifts over the course of the day. We have a poster and handouts. Leslie will be asked to coordinate.
 - c. **Forest Stewardship plan:** Christine attended the Waitsfield public forum where their town forest management plan was discussed. Issues discussed at their meeting included access/parking lot needed, some trails closing due to erosion from use and logging, Sinuosity estimate for trail construction.

Christine prepared documents for review by the NCC. A survey regarding uses in the Northfield town forest was discussed and finalized. The survey will be available at the NCC table on Town Meeting Day. An online survey will also be available; Leslie will be asked to work on this. Pam & Christine will ask the Town Manager if it would be possible to distribute the survey with the Town Report.

Christine will take the latest version of the forest/timber management plan and the Audubon Forest Bird Habitat Assessment to Audubon for their input on our plan.

We will need the data that the NCC and others have collected previously to incorporate into the stewardship plan. Ask Russ if we could all have a copy of the latest forest management plan; Christine has a copy. Larry, Russ and Leslie may have information on natural resources surveys and a wildlife plan. Ask Leslie and/or Russ if we could take the information they have and put together a map of trails, natural resources data, and the information on the VT Natural Resources Atlas. This would help in identifying sensitive areas that may need protection. CVRPC may be able to help with maps. Christine will call Rose Beatty to locate any updated reports on sections of the forest.

Will need a copy of the deed for the forest to incorporate into the plan. Christine will ask Russ whether he might have a copy, or any information about the deed.

Pam will look over the Trail Assessment prepared by LANDS for the Wu Ledges Forest Plan in Waitsfield. NCC will ask LANDS what they would be willing or able to do for our stewardship plan.

NCC also decided on some changes to the Draft Visions & Goals for the plan.

Christine handed out a timeline and list of possible activities for public engagement for the development of the forest management plan. NCC will plan to hold a public forum on the plan tentatively scheduled for April 28 at 6:30; Christine to reserve room. Pam & Christine will lead a snowshoe walk in town as part of Winter Carnival.

- d. **2015 Leahy Environmental Summit:** NCC members have been asked to attend in order to be part of a team that will seek to get support for the Water Street park project. Pam & Christine will attend on alternate days, March 4, and 19-21, if that is acceptable to the conference planners.
- e. **Term Renewals:** Reminder that some members are up for renewal of their appointments.
- f. **Officer Election Next Month:** Reminder that officers for the NCC will be elected at its next meeting
- g. **Other:** NCC to attend meeting with PC/CVRPC to update on them on NCC efforts in forest stewardship. Date to be determined.

Pam is working with the students and art teacher at Northfield Elementary School on the Urban & Community Forest mini-grant.

There is a conference on climate change and economic opportunities at VT Technical College on Feb 18.

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (unscheduled): None.

VI. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 8:55.

Respectfully submitted by Laura Hill-Eubanks, Northfield Conservation Commission.

These minutes are subject to changes and approval at the next regular meeting, but are substantially correct.